First record of *Histiobranchus australis* (Regan, 1913) (Synaphobranchidae), from the Azores (northeastern Atlantic Ocean)

by

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RÉSUMÉ. - Premier signalement d'*Histiobranchus australis* (Regan, 1913) (Synaphobranchidae) aux Açores (océan Atlantique nord-est).

La présence de *Histiobranchus australis* (Regan, 1913) aux Açores est fondée sur la collecte de deux spécimens en 1971, entre 2085 et 2096 m de profondeur, lors de la mission BIOAÇORES. C'est le signalement le plus au nord de l'hémisphère boréal.

Key words. - Synaphobranchidae - *Histiobranchus australis* - Atlantic Ocean - Azores - Distribution - First record.

The genus *Histiobranchus* Gill, 1883 comprises three species, two of which have been reported from the Atlantic Ocean: *H. bathybius* (Günther, 1877) from the North Atlantic and North Pacific and *H. australis* (Regan, 1913) from the Central and South Atlantic, South Indian and southwestern Pacific (Karmovskaya and Merrett, 1998; Melo *et al*., 2009). In the course of the BIAÇORES 1971 cruise to the Azores area, two specimens of *H. australis* were collected, representing the northernmost record of this species in the Atlantic Ocean.

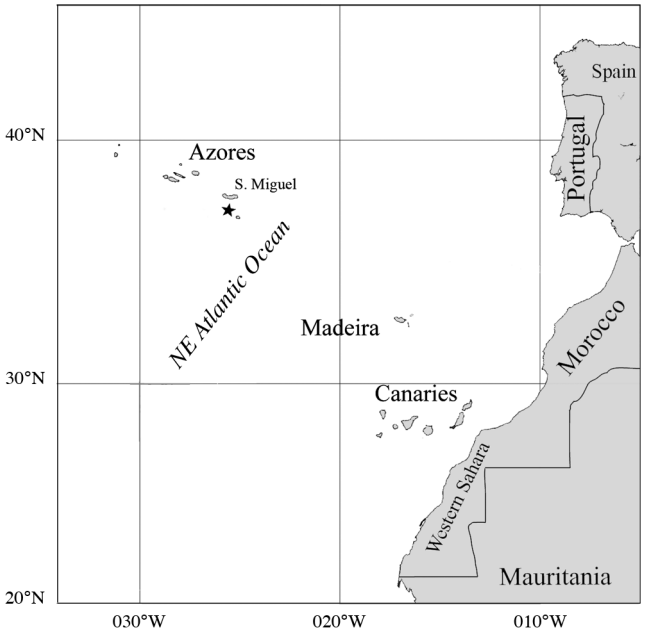

Figure 1. - Location (★) where specimens of *H. australis* were collected.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Two specimens preserved in alcohol and collected in November 1971 during the BIAÇORES cruise from the Azores archipelago (Fig. 1) and deposited in the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (MNHN) in Paris were studied. Measurements, counts and terminology follow Karmovskaya and Merrett (1998). Vertebral and fin-ray counts were obtained from X-rays.

Histiobranchus australis (Regan, 1913) (Fig. 2)

Material examined

MNHN 2009-0503, TL 225 mm; MNHN 2009-0504, TL 181 mm, BIAÇORES 1971 cruise (R/V *Jean Charcot*), station 206, off São Miguel, Azores, 37°20' N, 25°28' W, 2085-2096 m, 7 Nov. 1971, bottom trawl.

Distribution

This species was originally recorded from a few localities in the southern hemisphere, in both the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans (Karmovskaya and Merrett, 1998). Recently, Melo *et al*. (2009) recorded the species in the western South Atlantic off Brazil, and central Atlantic from St. Paul's Rocks. The two specimens reported herein are the northernmost records for the species, proving that *H. australis* may have a wider distribution than previously thought, including in the northern hemisphere.

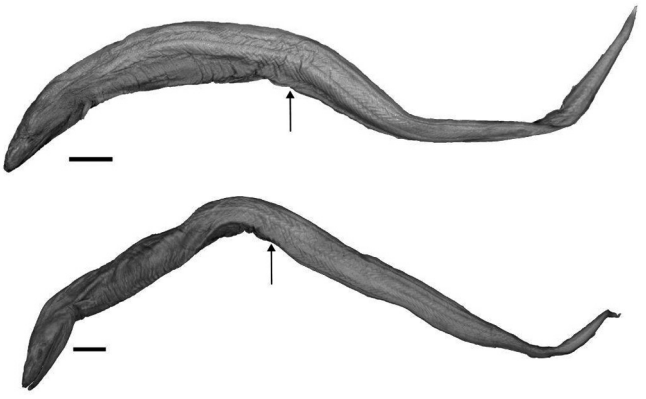

Figure 2 - *H. australis* (MNHN 2009-504, upper; MNHN 2009-503, lower) from the Azores. The arrow indicates anus. Scale bar = 10 mm.

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Table I. - Size (in mm), meristic and morphometric data of the specimens of *Histiobranchus australis* studied. * Partially damaged specimen.

	MNHN 2009-503	MNHN 2009-504
Measurements (mm)		
TL (total length)	225	181
HL (head length)	25	20
PDL (predorsal-fin length	35	27
PAL (preanal length)	101	79
GL (gape length of mouth)	21	18
BD (body depth)	ca.16	ca.15
CL (caudal length)	124	120
D (horizontal eye diameter)	4	3
G (gill slit length)	4	5
IW (interorbital width)	4	5
PAFL (preanal-fin length)	103	80
POL (postorbital length)	12.5	9.5
PRPL (prepectoral-fin length)	31	25
TRL (trunk length)	75	52
PDL/TL (%)	15.56	14.92
Counts		
Dorsal rays	–*	255
Total vertebrae	–*	129
Precaudal vertebrae	–*	65
Lateral line pores to origin of pectoral	9	10
Lateral line pores to origin of dorsal	13	11
Lateral line pores to anus	52	52
Supraorbital pores	5	4
Infraorbital pores	7	7
Preoperculomandibular pores	8	9

Remarks

Meristic and morphometric characters of the specimens studied are given in table I. All characters agree well with Karmovskaya and Merrett (1998). Colouration in alcohol is light-brown and darker on the snout, branchial region and around the anus. The outer edge of the median fins is dark in the posterior part of body.

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